

1493. W. 29.



A N
A C C O U N T
O F
JOHN RICE, Broker.



[Price One Shilling.]





MR. RICE.
the Broker.

A GENUINE
NARRATIVE

OF THE
LIFE and ACTIONS

OF

John Rice, Broker.

INTERSPERSED WITH

Some Curious ANECDOTES.

Particularly of

The Lord Mayor, and Bishop of Cambray.

*Fraus innexa clienti,
Quique ob adulterium cæsi, quique arma secuti
Impia; nec veriti Dominorum fallere dextras.*
VIRG. Æn. VI.

L O N D O N:

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INTRODUCTION.

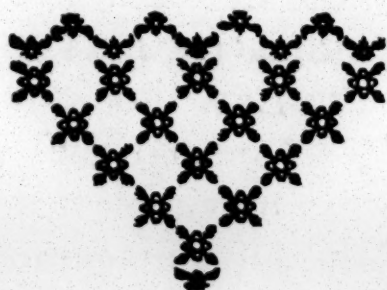


F the several Crimes that fall under the Denomination of Larceny and Fraud, there is not any so pernicious in its Consequences or hurtful to a Trading People, as that of Forgery. The fences against it are fewer than against any other Crime, whether Theft, House-breaking, or any Species of Robbery: hence it is that the *English* Law is more severe against every sort of this fraud than in some other Countries. The writing of a Note of Hand so as to chime in with a Man's real Subscription, is in *Germany* and elsewhere called a *Species falsi* of the highest Kind; but is not punished with Death, whereas in
England

England an Act of this Sort is by the Statute equally criminal as if a Man was to forge a Subscription; the judicious among the Heathens have fixed the Committers of Forgery in the worst place of Torments after Death, of this the Motto is a Testimony, notwithstanding the *French* Commentators, have given it a different Interpretation: Lawyers have looked upon it to be of so dangerous a Nature, that seldom or never has the Royal Mercy been extended toward the Perpetrators of it; and the late Sir *William Moreton*, Recorder, who died the 16th of *March*, 1762, has frequently declared, that as two Thirds of the Business in this great Metropolis, were transacted by Paper, it was necessary that the Law should have its full Effect, in order to preserve the purity and Entireness of that inevitable practice.

But tho' the Discouragements to Forgery be great and Exemplary, and that a full Brother as in the Case of *Kello*, *October*, 1762, was admitted an Evidence for the Crown, yet such is the Thrift of Gold, that many have tried the dangerous Experiment. Of this the Subject of the following Memoirs is a recent Example: and indeed of the numerous Victims to public Justice, he seems to be one whose Transactions ought to be communicated, whether we consider the Station of the people whom he abused, the Sums obtained by his fraud, the Method
by

by which the falshood was perpetrated, or the Manner in which it was detected, that not only the unwary may be taught to avoid the Rock on which he split, but that even the Adepts in Villainy may be deterred from the Courses which always end in Ruin and Destruction.



(11)

by which a balance was perpetuated, or
the balance was disturbed, that
the balance was disturbed to avoid
the balance was disturbed, that even
the balance was disturbed from
the balance was disturbed and





A
GENUINE NARRATIVE
OF THE
LIFE and ACTIONS
OF
John Rice, Broker.



JOHN RICE, late Broker, was the Son of *John Rice*, Broker, in *Cornhill*; he was born in *London*, and trained up in all the Arts of Brokerage and Annuities: Unhappily for him, he had a *London* Education, his Morals were not strictly looked into, he was continually in the midst of Pleasure, abounded in Money, swam in Plenty, and had Opportunities for gratifying every irregular Affection; how fortunate for him had

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he been bred up in some Charity-school, since it is a very just Observation of Doctor *Secker*, Archbishop of *Canterbury*, that few or none, trained up in those Seminaries have been remarked to come to an untimely End.

As *Rice's* Childhood and Youth yield nothing singular, so we may pass on to the Transactions which more immediately answer our intended Purpose. The Business, in which he succeeded his Father, is extremely lucrative, where there is constant Employment; Money can neither be lodged in the Funds nor taken up without the Intervention of a third Person, commonly called a Broker, whose Fees like those of the Lawyers, are frequently high and extravagant: Many become rich in this Way of Trade, and as many Frauds are committed in it as in any Article of Dealing whatever.

About six Years ago, he entered into a resolution of marrying a Woman who had lived four Years Servant with him; in this judging that a settled way of Life would be more convenient for himself, and have a Tendency to blind such as resorted to him in the course of Business. He kept a Chaise with four Horses, another of two; he had a very pretty House in *St. John's-Street, King's Road, Grays-Inn-Lane*, which Mr. *Joyce* had lately painted for him in the richest Manner, he had another House at *Finchley*, and to this he repaired *a la mode de Paris*.

By



By attending the *India House* and a daily Intercourse with *Exchange-Alley*, he became acquainted with many of the Adventurers to the *East* and *West-Indies*, many of their Subscriptions were in his Possession, and as he could write a Variety of Hands, the Round Hand, the German Text, and the Italian for Ladies, many of these became Sufferers by his Means: In a Word, he had every Opportunity for exercising the mean and fraudulent Art, that generally terminates in Ruin and Destruction, even where the Crime is of a private Nature, whereas his Offence was against the *Bank of England* and the *South-Sea-House*.

By transacting Business he became acquainted with the Clerks and Tellers, and these being Men of Character and Probity, they did not for some Time entertain the remotest Suspicion of him; by frequenting Coffee-Houses, he had, from his Liberality, the best of Characters from the Waiters, and such as served at the Bar; nay he had wrought himself into such a Degree of Intimacy and Confidence with these Innocents, that they never refused to sign any Paper he laid before them: Some have in Haste subscribed Letters of Attorney as Witnesses, without inspecting the Name of the Person from whom the pretended Power was deriv'd.

Among the other Advantages arising to a well-employed Broker, it is none of the least that frequently the Client dies betwixt the Time that the Money in the Fund is uplifted, and that when it should be delivered to him : Of this there are many Testimonies ; however, as in other Matters, no Man is so compleat in the Art of a Broker, but that he may be overseen ; and in all Transactions, much depends upon the Time and Circumstances, the Disposition of the Contractors, and the Temper of Mind they may be in.

It will not appear incredible that Mr. *Rice* might sometimes be over-reached ; and this at a Time, when through Gaiety and opulent Living, he had an Exigence to supply ; The Rank he maintained rendered it inconvenient to let his own Money lie in the Stocks, till the Interest became due ; present Demands were urgent, and one false Step occasioning another, he frequently had Recourse to that Art, which he but too well knew.

A Gentleman had employed him to buy a Share in the Funds of 10,000*l.* which he did with sufficient Candour and Veracity ; but his Client judging that the Purchase was made at a Time when Interest for Money was too high ; he receded from the Bargain which *Rice* had contracted. By this and a Family Exigence which required immediate
Supply

Supply, he had Recourse to the Trade of Forgery, and selling out at a Time when the Stocks were extreamly low, he was rendered incapable of paying the Money about which was the Bargain, so as to be reduced to the Alternative either of confessing the Truth to the Person with whom he had agreed, or of doing worse: At this Time, about three Years ago, he studied the Art of Gaming, and ventured to play at *Marybone* and *C* — — — *a* for considerable Sums; but being unlucky in his Chances and no way skilled at Dice or Chess like his Antagonists, he generally came off Loser; having often lost 50*l*, 70*l*, nay sometimes 100*l*, in one Night.

But the Summer of the Year 1761 was the unlucky *Æra*, wherein a Chain of fatal Circumstances tended to insnare him: For a Negotiation being begun between *Great-Britain and France*, for terminating a War that had raged furiously for five Years; the former sent over Sir *Hans Stanley* to *Paris*, a Gentleman of Address and Sagacity, and the latter commissioned M. *de Büffy*, a person of great Penetration and Foresight, one who was well acquainted with the *English* Funds, and who had formerly been Ambassador at *London*, and even followed the King to *Hannover*, and negotiated with Lord *Harrington*, Anno 1743.

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M. *Buffy* knowing that his Court wanted only to gain Time and that a Compact had been entered into with that of *Madrid* for curbing the growing Power of the *British* Nation, came over with no other View than that of diverting the *British* Ministry from seriously prying into the secret Articles of the Treaty: the Flota had left *Cartagena* in the Month of *February* before, so that if the Convention between the two Powers had been known, the Flota must have been intercepted: Nothing could dazzle the Eyes of the Court of *Great-Britain* except the Prospect of a Peace which she ardently desired, and which the People of the united Kingdom stood so much in need of.

M. *Buffy* before leaving *Paris*, artfully caused some Emissaries to publish thro' *England* and *Holland*, the War would become every Day more serious and terrible, and some unsuccessfull Events happening in *Germany*, strengthening the Conjecture, M. *Buffy's* Design was answered; the Stocks fell to 3 *per Cent*, and he by his Agents in *Amsterdam* and at the *Hague* bought Shares to the Amount of 400,000 *l*. By his coming to *England*, where after once and again conferring with the Duke of *Newcastle* and with Mr. *Pitt*, the Hopes of Peace began to revive, and the Stocks rose considerably; at this very Time he sold out the Shares he had bought,

bought, and by his Bargain gained about 70,000 *l.* This being done, he embarrassed the Negotiation, by intermixing the Claims of the Court of *Madrid*, which he said his Master ardently desired might be adjusted ; Mr. *Pitt* soon detected the latent Fire, that lay concealed under these plausible Terms. The *Frenchman* and he soon broke off the Negotiation ; the latter attributing the Want of Success to its true Cause, and the other only reflecting upon Mr. *Pitt* for his Obstinacy : The Duke of *Newcastle*, said Mr. *Buffy*, is a downright plain honest Man, but for Mr *Pitt*. " I know not what to make " of him, he is tenacious, obstinate, and " no way disposed to reconcile."

It was a little before the Beginning of this Negotiation, when Mr. *Rice* was obliged to sell out, in order to supply what he had lost at Chess, and to answer the Bargain of 10,000 *l.* for which he had contracted. And that his Credit might not seem to sink, he bought Shares, at a Time when the Interest of Money was at its Height, so that every Circumstance tended to involve him.

To remedy his Misfortunes, and to answer some Demands that were then urgent upon him, he begun the Trade of Forgery, which he did to such Perfection, that he signed the Names of the Persons whose pretended Letters of Attorney he had in his Custody,

Custody, so like their real Subscription, that the Clerks, though conversant in Writing, did, without the least Scruple, answer the fraudulent Demands. He at ten different Times forged Letters of Attorney; the first for 100*l*. the second for 1000*l*. the third for 3000*l*. the fourth for 500*l*. the fifth for 6000*l*. the sixth for 4000*l*. the seventh for 2000*l*. the eighth for 2500*l*. the ninth for 7000*l*. and at different Times he uplifted no less than 19,900*l*. being the Stock of Mrs. *Pearce*, a Lady from *Bedel* in *Yorkshire*.

The Lady had signified to him by a Letter that she wanted to sell out, and would be advised by him as to the Time when the same was to be done. *Rice* being in Possession of a recent Subscription, made out a Letter of Attorney to himself, and so artfully signed the Lady's Name, that no magnifying Glass (the right using of which is the best Detection of a Forgery) could distinguish it from her real Hand-writing.

Being in Possession of this Money, he revelled for some Time in all Kind of Riot, Gaming and Extravagance. His Substance daily diminished, and he becoming apprehensive of Mrs. *Pearce's* coming to Town, resolved upon an Elopement, and the rather as the Fate of *John Kello* for Forgery was recent and frightful. The Case of *Kello* is too singular to be passed over, since
the

Manner of his being apprehended is one of the strongest Evidences of a Fate attending upon Mankind.

The Money and Notes to the Amount of 1000*l.* were all, except 30*l.* put into a Box, and committed to the Care of a Woman in *College-Street, Westminster*, with whom he had kept Company. The Thieftakers who were in Search of him, had information of the Place where his Acquaintance lived, and came one Day to her Room with a Design to search it; and at the very Instant of their entering, a Boy comes from *Clarges-Street* with a Note directed to her, and desiring she would bring the Box along. The Line fell into the Hands of his Enemies, who instantly locked the Door, ran to the Public-house, laid hold on *Kello*, and so in Triumph carried him, the Woman, and the Box, before the well-known Sir *John Fielding*.

So surprising a Discovery of a latent Fire conducted with the utmost Secrecy and Art, alarmed *Rice* prodigiously; he left his Spouse in possession of considerable Sums, and tho' he insinuated his Design to retire beyond Sea, yet he desired she might not follow till hearing from him: he likewise kept his grand Design a Secret from his Attorney Mr *Gearing* with whom he parted on the Morning of his setting out.

It was on the second Day of *December* 1762 that he was first missing, for *Madam Pearce* had come to Town, and finding that her Money had been taken up by a false power of Attorney: All begun to be disclosed: his Spouse took a Journey in Haste, *Mr Gearing* who still was ignorant of his fraud accompanied her purely out of Compliment, and from this Circumstance he was apprehended and taken into Custody so soon as *Rice's* Elopement was known. However the Attorney was soon discharged, for he was known to *Mr Bristow*, Attorney for the *South-Sea House*, and had served as Clerk to *Mr. Dodd*, Solicitor to the Bank, both which Gentlemen imputed his attending on *Mrs. Rice* into the Country, more to a youthful Imprudence than to any criminal Design.

In the mean time a Statute of Bankruptcy was taken out against the fugitive, and a Message was sent to bring *Mrs. Rice* back to Town: She had reached *Harwich* and was once on Board a Brig going to *Holland* which was driven back by contrary Winds, and being put on Shore she was seized and brought to *London*, where finding an Execution in her House, and all in an Up-roar, she candidly surrendered up the Effects of her Husband, with 5000*l.* in Bank Notes, which had been secured within the Lining of her Stays; and the Creditors were

were so generous that they neither meddled with her Toilette her Body Cloathes, her private Purse, or whatever she could claim as a Woman, and she promoted the Sale of his moveables to the utmost of her Opportunity.

The Coach that he had bought the Summer before for carrying him to *Tunbridge*, his Chaise and Post-Chaises were sold for 160 *l*. He had three Setts of Horses, two Sett of which were fine Geldings, and one Sett of these were sold for 84 *l*. his Horses for 15 *l*. each, his Black Boy was auctioned for 30 Guineas; his other furniture, such as Paintings, Clock, Looking Glasses, Tea Equipage and other moveables, sold pretty well considering the place they were in, and in the whole amounted to about 3050 *l*.

It was in the Time of this Auction that the place to which *Rice* had retired, became known; for a packet being brought to Mr *Gearing*, he without opening it, carried the same to the *South-Sea House*, and brought the Courier along; by the Letters one of which was to Mrs. *Rice* and which were unsealed before Witnesses, it appeared that he had first retired into *Holland*; and now resided at *Cambray*, a City of *French-Flanders*, that he wanted his Spouse to come over and to bring what Money she could procure.

The City of *Cambray* has been famous for the League entered into by the *Pope*, the Kings of *France* and of *Spain*, the Dukes of *Fertara* and *Mantua* April 17th, 1509, against the Republick of *Venice*, and later than that period for being the Residence of the immortal *M. de Fenclon*, whose Goodness of Heart as a Man, whose Christian Deportment as a Bishop, whose Erudition as a Scholar, and moderation as a Casuist, were so universally admired, that the City and District of *Cambray* were preserv'd from the Calamitys of War, tho' two mighty Armies lay within View of its Ramparts in the Year 1711, the French Officers resorted thither as to an Asylum: the Duke of *Marlborough* appointed a Gaurd for protecting the Archbishop's Corn and what was more he in Company with Prince *Eugene*, visited the Author of *Telemachus*, and dined with him; these are Incidents that will be handed down to the latest posterity, nor will the Event pass on Oblivion that in the memorable Year 1763, the Court of *France* was so docile to that of *Great-Britain*, that in Opposition to the Tenure of her Conduct, she delivered up a fugitive, who had fled thither for Refuge: It stands upon the *River Lys*, twenty Leagues from the nearest Shore and forty from *Paris*, and tho' situated in the midst of a very pleasant and fertile Country, abounding

abounding with Manufactories of Lace, and of Cambrick, is yet but little frequented by Strangers, except such as are in *Rice's* Situation.

The Arrival of a Courier from Mr *Rice* tended to disclose the different parts of his Conduct, and what was not clear from the packet, was sufficiently illustrated by the Man ; he told that he had received nine Guineas from his Employer and a promise of as much against his Return, and that he had left him at *Turennes Head in Cambray*.

All this Intelligence was by the Attorney and the Managers of the *South-Sea House*, turned to the best Advantage: they acquainted the *Lord-Mayor* with the Particulars, and apprized the chief Officers of State: nay the Sovereign himself was applied to for procuring a Redress of the Injuries: and in the interim the Courier was treated with all possible Humanity; far from intimidating the Man: Mr *Criffinney* Secretary to the *South-Sea House*, behaved towards him with Generosity and Tendernefs, hired a Chamber for him at the *Spread Eagle in Grace-Church-Street*, and gave orders at the Inn that he should have whatever he called for.

In this situation he continued about a fortnight, and then was dismissed in the most hospitable manner; his Bed, Board and Lodging were pay'd for, and ten Guineas
were

were given him to defray the Expences of his Return: nay he was asked if he was pleased which answering in the affirmative and with a Satisfaction discernable both in his Looks and Gestures, he set out for *Cambray*, where a thousand Stories were propagated concerning the Treatment he had met with, and among others, that the Lord Mayor had first ordered him to be confined to a Dungeon, and then to be hanged. Though his own Appearance contradicted this last Report, yet it confirmed some other Calumnies that were raised: such as that he was confined from the moment of his first meeting the Attorney, that he was famished with Hunger during his Imprisonment, and had not received a single Dinner from any Person to relieve him: the *Provost of Cambray* was so touched with the Matter that he wrote a Letter to Mr *Criffinney*, remonstrating upon the Hardships the Man had undergone, and which he judged to be ill timed as their respective Sovereigns were labouring to bring about a Reconciliation between the Subjects of the two Crowns.

It is not easy to figure what surprize a Gentleman must be in, at hearing so false and unexpected a Story, yet Mr *Criffinney* being a cool Man, did without any ferment, return an Answer by the first Post, informing as above, and at the same Time intimating

ting, that the English Nation was not so void of Hospitality, Goodness and Humanity, as to treat a Stranger in the manner represented: and the Provost giving more Credit to Mr *Criffinney* than to the Courier ordered the latter to be confined to a Dungeon, and to be fed upon Bread and Water, and in the mean Time acquainted Mr *Criffinney* with what was done; but such was this Gentleman's Moderation and Goodness, that he Instantly wrote to the Provost and interceeded that the unhappy fellow might be set at Liberty, which was accordingly done.

While Mr *Criffinney* and the Provost of *Cambray* were corresponding about the Flandrian Courier, a more important Negotiation was on the Carpet between the Courts of *London* and *Versailles*, where Application to have *Rice* delivered up had been made by the *British* Ambassador, in Obedience to his Sovereign's Commands.

As the Subjects of *Great-Britain* and *France*, were disposed to a Reconciliation, a favour of this Kind was the more readily granted; the Preliminaries of Peace were not only signed at *Paris* on the 3d of *November*, but were approved by the Parliament of *Great-Britain* on the 9th of *December* following: the Debates were long, and were even sometimes like to become warm: Mr *Pitt* notwithstanding an excruciating

cruciating pain, attended ; tho' his Feet and Legs were wrapt up in Flannel, and that he was obliged to be carried between two Men, from his Chair to his Seat in the House of *Commons*, and when there to be three times recruited with Drops prescribed for his Disorder, yet he spake for three Hours and an half on the important Subject ; till his Malady increasing, he was obliged to withdraw two Hours before the final Resolve on an Address to his Majesty, approving what had been done : the Numbers for the Address were 319 to 65. Many speeches for and against it were that Day delivered, as might have adorned any Assembly that ever *Greece or Rome* beheld ; Mr *Pitt*, Mr *Fox*, Mr *Charles Townshend*, and Mr *Dempster*, spoke with distinguished Eloquence, and tho' the Populace talked variously on the Subject yet the Healths of a certain Minority were drunk in a particular manner at several very magnificent and grand Entertainments.

In the other House the Debates likewise ran high, the Dukes of *Newcastle* and *Grafton*, spoke upon the Subject, as did the Earls of *Temple*, *Hardwicke* and *Hallifax*, the Lord *Chancellor* and the Lord *Mansfield*, In the Course of the Debate it was shown that the King of *Prussia*, was not a natural but an accidental Ally ; that the Subsidy paid to him was greater than ever was paid
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to any other Potentate, and that tho' the Treaty between the Courts of *London* and *Berlin*, had expired before the last Negotiation was begun, yet the *Prussian* Interest had been taken as much Care of, as if the Treaty had subsisted in all its force; as in other Assemblies, there was a Diversity of Opinions, and one Peer made no Secret of declaring that was he to die next Day, he would desire no more honourable Inscription upon his Tomb, than that he was the Man to advise his Majesty to agree to the preliminary Articles which now lay before them.

The Approbation of a *British* Parliament, was extremely agreeable to the Court of *France*, whose Subjects had been ruined and Finances drained by an unsuccessful War; the Grand Monarch appeared unusually gay upon the Occasion, ever affecting a singular Willingness to forward the Reconciliation and to render it cordial and compleat; he had been hunting a whole Day, and on coming Home was told that the Affair was brought to a Period; he without suffering his Boots to be taken off, or refreshing himself, hastened to sign the Paper in which the Articles were contained.

Whether this Complacency was real is but a Circumstance, one Thing is certain, that a Trading People must be a Loser by a War, be it ever so successful; and the *French* Nation must, in a particular

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Manner, be Sufferers; for their Schools are in Time of Peace frequented by *English* Students, who at best make but a small Progress in classical Learning, in these foreign Seminaries. *Montpelier* is the worse for it, since during the period that Hostilities continue, none of the *British* Ladies or Gentlemen repair to the Minerals there, and to the Prejudice of their own Health and the Ruin of immense Fortunes, revel in Pleasure and all the Diversions of the *beau Monde*; but *Paris* has the greatest Reason to repine, as in Time of Peace, more People resort to that Metropolis from *Great Britain*, than from all *Europe* besides. An *Englishman* is particularly regarded in all Places of publick Resort and Entertainment. An *English* Nobleman, Gentleman or Merchant is so distinguished by his Liberality, that the Masters and Waiters at a Coffee House would rather hear any of these call for a Room, than a *German* Count, a *Swedish* Baron, a *Polish* Starost, a *Russian* Knez, a *Spanish* Don, or even a *French* Marquis.

The *French* Air has a magnetic Virtue to attract the *English* Gold, whether because Men are always intent upon what is most destructive, or that the Generality of the *English* Nation seem to love the Residence of their Forefathers, the *Noels*, the *Gascoignes*, the *Bourgoignes*, the *Cockaynes*, *Jansens*, *Vernons*, *Beauclercs*, *Amyands*, *Bar-tiers*,

tiers, Boissiers, Besanquets, Bourdiens, Brandons, Bouretts, Delamottes, Delabares, Delavals, and Fourdiniers, with many others, retain all the Vanity and Loquacity of the *French Nation*.

But tho' the Terms of Peace were agreeable to the *French Court*, yet they were not so pleasing to the generality of the *British Subjects*, considering the unparalleled and glorious Success of our Arms; there was but little huzzaing on the 22^d of *March*, the Day the Peace was proclaimed; the Illuminations and Bonfires on that Occasion were but few: For the monopoly of the sugar Trade or of the fishery was expected; at least one of them was looked for; But as in other Cases, Patriots became Courtiers, and Courtiers became Patriots. Pamphlets, setting off the Folly of retaining *Martinico* and *Guadalupe* as ridiculous, were published a short Time before; that the Sugar Planters in *Jamaica* would be Losers by such a Retention, was the Theme. Some even urged, that the monopolizing of the Fishery would be a Means of rendering our Seamen lazy, as these would be without Competitors, and that it was easy for the Court of *Rome* to give a Dispensation to the Inhabitants of the Catholic Countries, to eat Flesh in *Lent*, and even on *Fridays* and *Saturdays*, to the great Prejudice of the Fish Markets.

Of all these Murmurings the *French* Nation was sensible, and therefore to allure the People of *Great Britain* to the Peace, Care was taken that the Court should appear every Way splendid, gay and magnificent. Thro' the Winter of 1762 nothing resounded at the *Louvre*, but Masquerades, Balls, Operas, Assemblies, and Festivals, which increased the good Humour of the King and the Court, as many of the *English* Nobility and Gentry of both Sexes resorted thereto.

In this Disposition of Mind was the Grand Monarch, when the Duke of *Bedford* first demanded that *Rice* should be given up. He was answered in the most obliging Terms, and the King told him that no Rogues of one Kingdom ought to be protected in another, and that such was the good Opinion he had formed of his brother the King of *Great Britain*, that he was convinced he would be of the same Sentiments. " I do, " said he, consent that this Renegado be delivered, provided that a like Requisition " on my Part be granted by your King." The Duke expressed a due Sense of such Royal Condescension, and promised to send off a Courier to *London* with his Majesty's Reply.

Accordingly the Courier set out and delivering the Packet, his *Britannic* Majesty thought proper to advise with his Council on the Answer he had received, and the
Lawyers

Lawyers being of Opinion, that a King of *Great Britain* could not as the Law stood, comply with the Conditions mentioned by the *French King*, a Delay ensued; which gave Rise to a Report, that the Archbishop of *Cambray* refused to deliver up *Rice* and that he wanted to profelyte him to the *Roman Catholic Religion*; but the contrary of this whole fiction has been asserted in the chief Magistrates Letters to Mr *Cressfinney* formerly named.

The opinion of the Court of *Great Britain* being sent over to the Duke of *Bedford*, he directly waited upon the Duke *de Choiseuil*, who, he desired might represent the Matter to the King, which being soon complied with, his Majesty told him, that tho' the Laws of *Englnd* in their present Situation, did not answer the Opinion he at first expressed, yet such was his Regard for the King of *Great Britain*, that he consented to the delivering up of *Rice*, provided such a step was not to be taken for a Precedent: This being settled Mr. *Money* a King's Messenger, set out for *Cambray*, with an order from the Grand Monarch, to the Governor and Provost for delivering up the Person of *Rice*, who was still in Custody, and whom a Chain of fatal Circumstances seemed now to pursue. He had lived very sumptuously from the Time of his first Arrival and during his Confinement, and had almost drawn
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the Jailor into an Agreement, to connive at his Escape; the Prisoner would have given his All, to be set at Liberty, while the Keeper expecting that by Remittances from *England* he might receive more largely, refused to comply. In the mean Time the Courier arrived, and his Story broke off all Manner of Bargaining, and *Rice* was more closely confined. Without Hesitation he was delivered to Mr *Money*, who on the 10th of *March* set out with him in a Post Chaise for *Calais*, where arriving on the 14th they went on Board an *English* Vessel lying there for them, and landing the next Day at *Dover*, they proceeded by the way of *Canterbury* to *London*, where they arrived that Evening. He lay all Night in the Messenger's House, and next Day was carried for the first Time before the Lord Mayor, amidst a prodigious Multitude, who crowded to hear him examined; but in this, they were disappointed, for his Lordship had the Precaution to examine him in a private Room, to which none were admitted, but the Secretary and Clerks to the Houses, who had answered his counterfeit Comands. He appeared confounded at the Sight of those, whom he had grossly abused, and tho' a Man of Courage in other Cases, yet he discovered a Childishness here which even dissolved him into Tears. His Lordship observing this, he shifted his Eyes from the Criminal,

Criminal, and with Sympathy begun to look upon the Man, and with a Mildness, so becoming a chief Magistrate, advised him to call up all the Succour possible from Temper, Coolness and Recollection; that so he might to the utmost of his Power, make Comperfation to such as had Dealings with him. At this Time nothing was to be done: he could only inform that his Papers and Pocket Book were lost, and that he neither could recollect Names nor Circumstances; the Excuse was sustained; his Lordship sympathized with him, advised him to recollect matters, and appointed him to appear on *Saturday* the 19th in the Morning; and in the mean Time, to treat him with the greatest Lenity, he committed him only to the *Poultry Compter*, where tho' he was narrowly watched, yet he had by his Lordship's Order all possible Indulgence.

The news of a second Appearance, so increased people's Curiosity, that greater Numbers crowded to the *Mansion House* than had done the Day before; however the Disappointment was the same; none being admitted but the Gentlemen belonging to the Funds, as at the preceeding Examination. At this Time he made a full Confession of all his Transactions; he declared he had no Accomplice in his repeated Forgeries on the *Bank* and *South Sea Company*, amounting
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to 45,000 *l.* which Money together with his own Fortune (according to my Information 9000 *l.*) he had lost in the *Alley*, except what was found upon his Wife; and about 300 *l.* he had carried off with him and which he had expended. That the first Loss he had in the *Alley* was 5000 *l.* being the Difference of some Stock which he had agreed for on Account of a Gentleman, who would not take it of him, *i. e.* would not agree to the Terms, and not having Money to make good that Difference, in Order to keep up his Credit in the *Alley*, he was induced to practise Forgeries; that the Transaction happened the 12th of *March* 1761, and meeting almost every Day with Losses he went on in forging, till at twelve different Times he obtained the foresaid Sum. He offered to sign his Confession which his Lordship very justly refused, he then begged to be indulged with Liberty to remain in the *Poultry Compter* till the next Sessions, and that his Spouse might be with him, both which his Lordship granted; upon Condition that his Wife did not go out after she was once in it, if she did, not to be suffered to go to him any more, and that no other person was to be admitted to him: he told the Lord Mayor that the Bishop of *Cambray* promised to protect him, if he would embrace the Roman Catholic Religion, which he absolutely refused; that

that the Guilt of his Crime sat heavy on him, for he enjoyed not one happy Hour during his Absence, and that he was glad to return to *England*, that he might suffer that punishment which he most justly deserved: The Lord Mayor recommended to him in very moving Terms, to make the best Use of his Time, to prepare for a future State; for that the Nature of his Crime was such that he could not hope after Conviction, to obtain the Royal Mercy.

But specious as the Pretence is about being dealt with to embrace the Roman Catholic Religion, yet from my best Information, the same was false and unbecoming, for not only the Letter from the chief Magistrate to Mr. *Criffinney* has contradicted the Assertion, but every Circumstance tends to discredit the Tale. For what Advantage could arise to the Roman Catholics by making *Rice* a Profelyte? His Money was spent; he was no Mechanic, nor could he earn a Livelihood at the *Cambrick* Manufactory, the Trade of the Country; he was no Scholar, not yet was such a Proficient in the *Flandrian* Dialect, as to live comfortably among the Inhabitants. In a Word, he must have been subsisted from the Bishop's Income, which, though it be considerable, viz. 100,000 *livres*, or 4,166 *l.* 13 *s.* 8 *d.* is yet but small toward supporting the infe-

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rior Clergy of the Diocese, and the numerous Poor that are there.

Besides the Archbishop M. *St. Albin* is a Person of great Discretion and Prudence, a Man of Lenity and Moderation: He was Preceptor to the Prince of *Condé's* Son, was trained up by the immortal *Fenclon*, in the most free and generous Sentiments, to which he was a sincere Devotee. And for Instance of his Goodness, when the Provost of *Cambray* informed him that he would cause the Report of endeavouring to proselyte *Rice* to be contradicted in all the News Papers thro' *Holland*, the good Prelate interposed; "for," said he, the poor Man is sufficiently loaded with his own Sin, let not us add to the Weight of his Calamity, for none who know me will believe it." The Court of *France* has, in their Nomination to the Archbishoprick of *Cambray*, always had an Eye to the Words of the dying *Fenclon*; who, on his Death-bed earnestly entreated, that his Successor might be a Man of Piety and Learning, one who was charitable in his Thoughts, his Words, and his Actions. However, perhaps the *Flanders* Courier might have pretended a Message from his Grace, or that some Refugee, glad of a Livre to buy him a Dinner, might counterfeit such a Story, and even impose upon *Rice*; but by all Accounts no such Proposal was ever made by M. *St. Albin*,
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who, I believe, would rather have protected him for adhering to the Protestant Religion, than for being profelyted to the Roman Catholic Faith.

Neither is it easy to believe that in the Space of two Years, he could squander 45,000 *l.* besides his own Fortune; 'tis true the Man loved Gaiety, was a Slave to the Fooleries of high Life, and what is worse greatly addicted to Gaming at which he lost considerable Sums.

The last time of his Appearance was on *Monday* the 21st of *March*, when he was conducted privately to the Mansion House; without being observed: Mr *Hayes* Keeper of the Compter walked before him and the Turnkey immediately behind him; at this time the Examination was more secret than ever, as the very Marshal Men were ordered to the Outside of the Door; he persisted in what he had advanced, and wrote down the Names of the Persons, whose Letters of Attorney he had forged, by comparing which with the real Subscription there appeared the strongest Likeness: this being over, he humbly begged of the Lord Mayor that his Friends might have Liberty to visit him, which was granted, and his Wife was suffer'd to go out and in as she pleased.

Mr *Beckford* the Lord Mayor, deservedly acquired the highest Commendation and Applause for his Humanity and Candour thro' the whole of this Affair like; the

Laws themselves, he did not proceed in Wrath but in Equity ; he discovered the Gentleman and the Scholar, thro' every part of his Conduct, and evidenced, that he had not like many others, neglected the Golden Opportunities of improving in the several Branches of useful and polite Literature in his younger Years ; he studied at *Ballicol College Oxford* with Care and Attention, and afterwards plied the Theory and Practice of Physic under the famous *Boerhave* : he travelled into *France* in Quest of Improvement, and has so well learned the Art of Politeness and what people call the grand *finesse*, that he is justly esteemed one of the best Conductors of an Entertainment, in *Europe*. A Man truly great, when Splendour is required, but content to be unknown when no Munificence is expected ; to him are the poor at this Time indebted for the moderate price of Bread, and to him is owing the reasonable Rate at which Sugars are retailed ; he did not like some Justices of Peace, too frequently named in the publick papers exult in an Unhappy Man's Misfortunes, nor yet did he order *Rice* to be loaded with Irons ; he would not suffer him to sign his own Confession, and to be his own Executioner in open violation of the *magna Charta* which provides that no Man shall be his own Accuser.

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From the Time of his last Exammination, he lived in great Decorum; His food was no more than what barely could sustain Nature, for resigning himself to his fate, and committing the care of his funeral to his Spouse, he almost fixed his mind on another World, notwithstanding the vain Insinuations that his Life would be spared, and so generous were the Gentlemen who had suffered thro' his means, that being informed he wanted wherewith to procure the Necessaries of Life, they sent a purse of ten Guineas to support him: he was conducted both secretly and regularly to the chapel to Prayers, and appeared both devout and serious; and on the 15th of *April* about half an Hour before nine in the morning he was brought in a Coach to the *Old Bailey*. As soon as he set his Foot on Ground he fainted away, but being carried into the Queen's Head where he was restored by some Drops, he wept bitterly and appeared extreamly dejected. In about a Quarter of an Hour he was conducted into Court where he again fainted away. About half an Hour after nine his Trial came on before Lord *Mansfield*; he was indicted for forging a Letter of Attorney, and uttering the same knowing it to be forged in the name of *Anne Pearce* Widow of, *H. Pearce Esq.* of *Bedel* in *Yorkshire*, the Sum the Indictment was laid for, was only 500*l.* tho'

tho' he had transferred of this Lady's Stock 19,900*l.* Mr *Fennelou* one of the Clerks of the *South Sea House*, proved the filling up the Letter of Attorney, Mr *Lowth* another Clerk, proved the filling up the Transfer, saw *Rice* execute it and swore that he witnessed the same, Mr *Bull* the Supervisor, proved the Letter of Attorney passing the Committee; Mr *Montague* the Deputy Accountant, acquainted the Court of the Stock being replaced to Mrs *Pearce* after the fraudulent Transfer was detected; Mrs *Pearce* was then called, who being shewn the Letter of Attorney, deposed it was not her Hand Writing, and that she never gave him any such power: and so the Evidence being closed on the Side of the Crown, Mr *Rice* was acquainted that now was the Time to make his Defence; to which he answered that he had nothing to say, only desired some Gentlemen might be called to his Character, two of whom were only sworn, and spake of him as a Person of Credit in his Profession; for the Court acquainted him, that where Proofs were positive, Character would be of no Weight; on this the Jury, without Hesitation, brought him in guilty. This being over, he pleaded for Mercy, and entreated his Lordship to interceed with the King for his Life, urging in his Behalf, that he had been offered Protection at *Cambray*, if he would have changed

ged his Religion ; to which his Lordship replied, that he could not give him the remotest Prospect of the Royal Mercy, and therefore advised him to think of no such Thing, to make the best Use of the short Time he had to live in preparing himself for another World. Mr. *Akerman*, was then ordered to remove him from the Bar, and to take him into his Custody.

About Five in the Evening he was again brought to the Bar with the other Prisoners, to receive Sentence of Death, which was past upon them in a very moving and pathetic Manner, by Mr. *Eyre*, a Gentleman who had been elected Recorder but a few days before.

After being lodged in *Newgate*, he went more deeply into the Recesses of his own Heart ; and Conscience, like a faithful Mirror, representing the different Parts of his Conduct in all the Uglinefs of Deformity, he became every Day more weary of his Life, as the faithful Speech of his Judge had entirely removed any Thoughts of Forgiveness, and continuing in this melancholy Situation till he ended his Life, and with it an insupportable Load of Misery, by the Hands of the common Executioner.

Mr *Rice* was a person of an exceeding low Stature being scarce four feet ten Inches high, and so meagre in his Body that if it was not for his Complexion he might readily pass for a *Spaniard*, or a *French Man* a native

tive of *Languedoc* : however his Hair was pale, his Nose remarkably high, and aquiline, his Eyes large and blue, and the whole of his features long and protuberant : he liked Dress and Gaiety and on every Occasion appeared with a singular Agility : at his first appearance before the Lord Mayor he was dressed in a Suit of Black Cloaths full trimmed, and had a Bagg wigg on, at his second wore a Suit of light Grey trimmed with Black, the same as on the Day of his Trial, when every person was moved with his Condition as he was observed to shed Tears.

The vast Concourse of People of Distinction in the Court-House, tended to affect him ; and to fill him with the greater Horror and Calamity, he had the Mortification to be conducted to a Prison where, by the Nature of the Place, he could not expect the same Indulgence as in the *Poultry Compter*.



F I N I S.

